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QV A E R E S

CONCERNING

The state of the CHVRCH

OF

SCOTLAND.

DEVT. 27. 18.

*Cursed be he that maketh the blind to goe
out of the way : And all the people shal
say, Amen.*



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Q V A E R E S.

1 **W**AS there ever any Realme since Christs incarnation professed Christian religion so universally through all the parts thereof, even to the utmost corners, in such puritie both for doctrine, discipline, and publick worship, with such libertie, and for so many yeares together, as our Realme hath done? In the Apostles dayes wee read not of whole cities, let bee kingdomes, to have professed the name of Christ. Soone after the departure of the Apostles, sundry corruptions entred into the Church, and the mysterie of iniquitie which was working under ground in their time, was advanced by little and little till it came to the full ripenesse. Neither was there any nation free from the open profession of Paganisme the first 300. years. Since Constantines time, that Christianitie began to prevaile above Gentilisme, there hath been no Church, which hath not been defiled with much superstition, and corrupted with many errors, till the dayes of late reformation. From the first time of reformation to this houre, no reformed Church hath spread it selfe so universally through any kingdome, with such puritie of profession, but either their profession is not so universall, being intermingled with Papists, Anabaptists, Lutherans, or not so pure, as in our neighbour Church.

2 Was there ever nation which sealed their pro-

cession with Oathes, Covenants and Subscriptions,
so i nide sally, and so oft, as ours hath done. How
often hath the confession of faith, called the Kings
confession, been subscribed by persons of all estates
through the Realme, or by particular persons from
time to time, as occasion was offered to require their
subscription? A more fe rful oath cannot be conceived,
then is taken in the end of that confession, in these
Words, Promising and swearing by the great
name of the Lord our God, that we shall con-
tinue in the obedience of the doctrine and dis-
cipline of this Church, and shall defend the
same according to our vocation and power, all
the dayes of our lives, under the paines con-
tained in the law, and danger both of body and
soule in the day of Gods fearefull iudgement.
This is the promissorie oath. The assertorie oath
Whereupon it is grounded, is this. Wee therefore
willing to take away all suspition of hypocri-
sie, and of such double dealing with God, and
his Church, protest and call the searcher of all
hearts for witnesse, that our minds and hearts
doe fully agree with this our confession, pro-
mise, oath, and subscription. So that we are not
moved for any worldly respect, but are per-
swaded onely in our consciences, through the
knowledge and love of Gods true Religion,
printed in our hearts by the holy spirit, as we
shall answer to him in the day, when the se-
crets of all hearts shall be disclosed. To under-
lie the pains contained in the law, and danger both of
body and soul in the day of Gods fearful iudgement,
and to answer to him in the day. When the secrets of
all hearts shall be disclosed, are not lightly to be con-
sidered, but to be pondered deeply, and ever to be re-
membered, specially when we have to do with this our
confession.

3 I appeale to every mans conscience, Whether we have adhered to all the generall and particular clauses of this our confession, or not? When we say in this confession, that we detest and abhorre the Antichrist, his five bastard sacraments, with all his rites, ceremonies, and false doctrine added to the ministration of the true sacraments, without the word of God, his cruell iudgement against infants departing without the sacrament, his absolute necessity of baptizing, doe we not protest that we will abhorre and detest, confirmation one of the five bastard sacraments, kneeling, which is a rite added to the ministration of the supper, without the warrant of Gods word, and invented by the Antichrist, privat baptisme, which is grounded upon the necessitie of baptisme, and doubting of the salvation of all infants dying unbaptised. When we protest we abhorre and detest his dedicating of dayes, doe we not condemne observation of anniversarie holydayes? And when we protest we detest and abhorre not onely his own worldly Monarchie, but also his wicked Hierarchie, doe we not condemne the degrees of Bishops and Archbishops? When we say, We abhorre and detest all contrary religion and doctrine, (to wit, to the former confession mentioned immediatly before, and the Christian faith received, beleevd, and defended by the Church of Scotland) But chiefly all kind of Papistry in generall, and particular heads, even as they are now damned and confuted by the word of God, and Kirk of Scotland; doe we not condemne Archbishops, Bishops, holy dayes, kneeling, confirmation, privat baptisme, seeing all these particular heads were damned by our Church either in the former confession, the first or second booke of Discipline, and acts of generall Assemblies before the

Jayd confession was sworne to and subscribed, and if
any preased to practise them after they were damned,
the censures of the Church was inflicted upon them.
Have we not of late failed in all these particulars, &
consequently violated our oathes, promises, and sub-
scriptions, under-lying the danger both of body and
soule in the day of Gods fearfull iudgment, unlesse
we repent, which we cannot seriously doe, except we
recover, so farre as in us lieth, what is lost, to the
losse of any temporall thing whatsoever. to the spen-
ding of the last drop of our blood, and defend what
is yet reserved whole and sound, with the same ha-
zard. For what is that hazard or losse in compari-
son of all the paines contained in the law, and danger
both of body and soule, in the day of Gods fearfull
iudgement. Let no man deceive himselfe, thinking
to deceiue God with evasions and shifts. The sear-
cher of all hearts knoweth what was thy meaning,
when thou saidst, Wee call the searcher of all
hearts for witnesse, that our minds and hearts
doe fully agree with this our confession, pro-
mise, oath, and subscription: and what was the
meaning of the Church of Scotland, with which thou
protected, thou would not use double dealing,
was too manifest both in practise, preaching, and
the authentick records above mentioned. And put
the case the particular heads above specified had been
a matter indifferent, howbeit they were not so este-
med by our Church yet who can deny but this farre
at least was intended to eschew all occasions and pro-
vocations to tyranny, and superstition, and therefore
the oath, howbeit in a matter indifferent, was law-
full and so remaineth, as long as they remain occasi-
ons and provocations to tyrannie, and corruption, yea
as long as the forbearance of them is not proved to
bee a sinne. For great regard should be had even to a
rash

with oath if it be not or prove not unlawfull,
reverence wee ought to carry to the great name of
God. Remember of the breach of the oath made un-
to the Gibeonites.

4. Ioyning all the three former Quæres together,
I aske, if ever a Realme professing Christian religi-
on so universally, in such puritie, with such liberty,
for so many yeares together, and sealing their profe-
sion with such solemne promises, oaths, and subscrip-
tions (if there were any such to be found in any hi-
storie) that did make such defection, and if they did,
if the heavy judgements of God did not overtake
them? Or secluding the consideration of our oaths,
subscriptions, and solemne covenants, I aske if any of
the reformed Churches in any Realme, or Province,
professing the Gospell in the same puritie and so ma-
ny yeares, as we have done, hath made so great a de-
fection as many of us have done. Have they retur-
ned to their vomit, taken up that which they reiected
and condemned, remaining still a reformed Church,
and not overtaen with force of Armes. If not,
then suppose we had never sealed our profession
with such solemne seales, our defection is singular,
and our punishment will bee exemplarie, unlesse wee
repent, recover what is lost, and defend what remai-
neth uncorrupted.

¶ Whereunto doth this defection tend? Doth it
not tend first to perfect conformitie with the English
Church, then at last will it not end in full confor-
mitie with the Roman kirk. The intent of the first
is professed by his Maiestie in expresse terms extant
in print: and therefore be not deceived with the pro-
mises and protestations of our usurping and preten-
ded Prelates. As for example, they wil say to you, his
Maiestie careth neither for he Saint, nor she Saint,
but for dayes dedicate to Christ. They lie: for his

Maiestie observeth both he and she Saints dayes, as
wel as dayes dedicate to Christ. So howbeit you could
digest both a Christmas preaching, and a Christmas
pie, which once ye lothed, ye must and shall ere it be
be long, doe as much for S. Bartholomew, virgine
Mary, the Innocents and all the rest of their Saints.
And for five ceremonies ye shall have fiftie, yea an
hundred. All the reliques of Rome, which are lying
like stinking filth in their church, shall be commu-
nicated to us. The paterne of their altar, their ser-
vice, their Hierarchie, and Romish policie, shall be set
up in our church. This defection tendeth yet fur-
ther, to wit, to conformitie with Rome. What
meaneth the Bishop of Spalato in the preface be-
fore his fift booke, to exhort his Maiestie to pro-
ceed as he hath already begun, to restore the Chri-
stian Church to unitie. Papist, Lutheran, For-
malist, and Calvinist, must then all bee reconci-
led together, and united in one. How I pray you,
are wee united to the English Church? Wee must
yeeld all to them, they will not yeeld any thing at
all to us, no not an hoofe, sayd Whitgift Bishop
of Canterburie, neither are they urged to yeeld a-
ny thing unto us, but wee are unmercifully dealt
with to yeeld unto them. Shall we for con-
formitie with the Lutheran the next day accept of
his monstrous opinions, and other fond ceremonies,
after the same manner, and the third yeare for re-
conciliation with Rome, drink of the deep of her ab-
ominations? or how shall that great worke come
to passe. Neither England nor Rome giveth the
least token of their coming towards us. Yet wee
must play the fooles, and turne our face to them,
and take our iourney first to England, then to
Rome. The Bishop of Spalato hath not ridden all
the fords of Tweed. Well, whatsoever is intended

this our conformitie will of it selfe tend in the end to full Poperie. For suppose wee should give place to these disturbers of our church, who for their owne gaine and glory, have layd aside all respect to Gods glorie, the gaining of soules, and the weile of their brethren, yet Poperie should increase more mightily, as it hath done in our neighbour church.

6 Whether our Conformitie end at last in Conformitie with Rome or not, What reason have we to leave our conformitie with the pure Apostolicall Churches, or the best reformed Churches in forraine Nations? Brightman compareth our Church, and the rest of the best reformed, to the godly Church of Philadelphia, the English to the glorious, and lukewarme Church of Laodicea. Shall we cast of our conformitie with Philadelphians, and conforme to Laodiceans? Is not their Church government the same that it was this day 100 yeare since in time of the grossest darkenesse and blindnesse, Archbishops, Bishops, Archdeacons, Chancellours, Officials, Commissaries, exercising Ecclesiasticall jurisdiction in their spirituall Courts, as they did in time of Poperie, excluding both Preaching and Ruling Elders from the government of their owne Parishes, and the joynt government of the Church, excommunicating, suspending, depriving, by their owne sole authoritie, meddling with Testamentarie, and other causes, not belonging to Ecclesiasticall Consistories. The Bishop taking to himselfe the sole administration of spirituall jurisdiction over many 100 hundred Churches; yea, deputing the same to Civilians, Chancellours and Officials, and meddling with the administration of civill Affaires, as best be seeming his grandeur. This Bishop is not Pauls Bishop, nor yet the Bishop which was first erected in the ancient Church.

Church. He differeth as far from him as the Con-
fall in a Senate, doth from a King or Monarch. So
seeing he is neither the divine, nor humane Bishop,
he must be that Satanicall, brought in by the Anti-
christ. It were wearisome to goe thorow the calling
and functions, of their Suffraganes, deanes, canons
and prebendaries, organists, singing boyes, pist-
lers, gospellers, priests, deacons, who are halfe
priests: Their fasts, their Eaves, their feast daies,
their crossing, kneeling, bishopping, bouseling of the
sicke, baptisme by supposition private baptisme, copes,
capes, tippets, surplices, rochets, churching of women,
marriage toyes, funerall rites, their gestures varied
superstitiously at Service, the forme of their pray-
ers, and the rest of their ceremonies. It sufficeth that
the best and worthiest among them, hath continual-
ly pleaded against them, that they had never quiet pos-
session in their owne Church; that they were disused
in many Congregations in the latter yeeres of Queen
Elizabeth, of worthy memorie, till they got strengtb
again, immediately after the Kings coronation;
that they are obtruded onely by Authoritie, not liked
of by many of the Formalists themselves, who doe
temporise onely, with a bad conscience. How shall
we then conforme to a Church enthralled, and under
bondage? How many times have the godly among
them put up their prayers to God, and preferred pe-
tition to King and Parliament for the Church poli-
cie of Scotland, and the libertie of that pure profes-
sion, which we have enjoyed many yeares; and shall
that our glorious Garland be stamped under foot?
The morning clouds which eclipsed the beginning
of their reformation remaine unscattered to this day:
and shall they be suffered to come within our Hori-
zon; not in our morning, but after many yeares, at
the noone-tide of our day, to obscure the glorious
Gospel.

Gospell, which hath shined to us in as cleare and pure
brighnesse, as ever to any Nation. Consider the
charges which must be bestowed upon these idle fun-
ctions, and superstitious ceremonies. If the Abbeyes
be recovered out of Noblemens hands, I perswade
my selfe they will either be converted to the mainte-
nance of Deanes, canons and prebendaries, Organes,
sopes, and other unlawfull uses; or else in time bee
restored to the old crows to build their nests in a-
gaine.

7 If there were a time of conformitie to be gran-
ted, which we will never grant; yet is this a fit time?
When the Reformed Churches abroad are in so great
bizard, and some presently under the fierie tryal.
When the Antichrist, and all his adherents hath re-
sumed fresh courage to prosecute their bloudie de-
signes, hoping wholly to extirpate true religion out
of Europe. Is it time to conforme to them, to take
on the badges of their profession? Will not this in-
courage the enemy, and discourage our friends?

8 If the antichristian governement before descri-
bed, and the many superstitions be not matters of
waight, but trifles; which they shall never be able to
prove with sound and solide Arguments; why are
we persecuted for them? Is it a small matter to turn
a Minister out of his Office, wherein he hath ser-
ved many yeeres, to send him and his family wife
and children, to beg their bread, so farre as in them
lyeth. For having dedicated themselves to the service
of God, and spent their former time in studies, they
are unable to make shifts, as Artizans, and Trades-
men can doe. Was there ever a persecutor since the
dayes of Christ, who with one breath did both per-
secute, and pronounce the cause wherefore he did per-
secute to be a trifle. Our Persecutors then are worse
by many degrees, then the Ethnick, Hereticall, or Po-
pish

pish persecutors, and consequently the worst that
were. Our case is yet the more to be pittied, that
are denyed the protection of Law: When we would
flee to the sanctuarie of justice, we are shut back
like unworthy beasts, and no more pittied, then
we were doggs, left, or redelivered, into the hands
merciless tyrants, who have given testimony
of their owne mouthes, of the loyaltie, and good
behaviour of those whom they have persecuted.

9 After so many Quæres, and Expostulations,
in all humilitie and reverence, to the Honorable
the True, and Native Estates of Parliament, Nobles,
Barones, and Bargeses: not regarding that bastard
estate of Prelates, I would demand two things.
First, why they suffer the High Commission, a
court not established by the Statutes of the Realme,
thus to tyrannise over the Church, over dutifull
and loyall subjects, fining, confining, suspending,
depriving, warding, and directing the Lords of se-
cret Councell, to banish, or to give out letters of
borning, against Ministers, or other Professours,
for not conforming to Popish ceremonies against
their conscience. The Parliament is the Highest
Court of the Realme, and therefore should pro-
vide that no strange court be set up to oppresse the
subjects, without their approbation and consent,
and therefore it is, not onely our Quære, why it is
not, but our Request, that it may be put down. For
it is the strangest, the most tyrannicall, and lawlesse
Court, that ever came in this land, liker to nothing,
then to the Spanish Inquisition, whereunto it will
turne in end to the full, as papistrice increaseth.
That one or two Archbishops, with two or three As-
sociats, Ecclesiasticall, or Civill persons, such as
they please to assume to themselves, being nominate

the Kings letters patents, should Judge in all Ecclesiasticall causes, and inflict both temporall and spirituall censures, and punishments, according to their pleasures, is contrarie and repugnant to the word of God. For spirituall power, neither Princes nor Parliaments, may give to Ecclesiasticall, or civill persons: neither are ecclesiasticall persons capable of the power of the temporall sword. Seeing then, neither the one, nor the other can be lawfully done, this high commission, so much grieved at in our neighbour Church, should not be suffered to have place amongst us.

Next I demand, in all humilitie and reverence, why acts of pretended and Null Assemblies, are ratified in Parliament, and Statutes made, wherewith our pretended Prelates, make snares to entrap their brethren, and wherewith they countenance their tyrannie? Was ever the generall Assembly convocate in time of Parliament, or their advice and information sought, since these Alterations beganne. In England, howbeit the prelates sit in the upper house as Barons, yet they have besides, a convention of the clergie, which is called the Convocation house, which representeth almost our generall Assembly (for they have no other) whose advice was never neglected, no not in time of poperie. What hath our Church deserved, as thus to be neglected and misregarded, and the report, advice, consent and vote of Prelates to be taken, who are both Judge and Partie in this cause? The Acts of that corrupt, and pretended Assembly at Gliscom, were not onely ratified, and confirmed, but also under name of explanation enlarged, and Bishops excoemed from the judgement and censures of the generall Assembly. Shal the like be done now for
that

Dial. be-
twixt the
old Prote-
stant & new
Formalist,
p. 54. 55.

that pretended and null Assembly holden last
Perth, God forbid, that the Honourable Estate
should make so light account of their owne credit
among the Reformed Churches, to whom the proceedings
of that pretended Assembly are discovered, and
if need be, may yet be further discovered: Or if
their Honours should make light account of many
faithfull subjects, their owne deere countrymen
who are resolved, rather then to conforme, to suffer
temporall losses, and to render their lives. Howbeit
some of them have defiled themselves with these cor-
ruptions, will they be avenged on their brethren
who for conscience sake have kept themselves free?
Qu. Elizabeth of famous memorie, did at the
suit of the Commons; and upon a bill presented
into the house, at the Parliament holden
the 14 of her raigne, signifie in expresse words
yet upon record, that her will and pleasure
was, That no Preacher or Minister, should be
impeached, or indicted, or otherwise molested
or troubled, for the Rites and Ceremonies in
question, as the preamble of the saide Bill doth
purport: Adding these comfortable words fur-
ther, that her Majestie, as Defender of the
faith, would aide and maintaine all good Pro-
testants to the discouragement of all Papists.
We doe expect the like, not onely at the hands of
honourable Barons and Burgeses, but also of our
Nobles, who should be nourish-fathers to faithfull
subjects, but no maintainers of proud Prelates, ene-
mies to their estate, and the estate of Church and
Countrie.

FINIS.